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MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

TOP SECRET-SENSITIVE  
CONTAINS CODEWORD

October 24, 1975

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM: GENERAL SCOWCROFT

SUBJECT: China Trip

BD  
PMT

The Secretary asked that I pass the following message to you regarding the press play on his meetings with the Chinese.

"I am disturbed at the continuing flood of press reports that the Chinese and we quarrelled vigorously about detente. The impetus for most of these stories appears to be a single fabricated version of my meeting with Mao Tuesday night, on top of Chiao's toast the first night. Other press agencies have picked up and magnified this theme.

As you know from my summary reports of my conversations with the Chinese, we did not have bitter arguments over detente. Obviously, the Chinese would like detente to fall apart; our moving into confrontation with Moscow would ease many of Peking's problems. In any event they want to warn the West about Soviet aggressive design and play up the line that war is probable. But our talks were friendly and we did not have the brawl the press suggests. At the same time there were disturbing elements and we do indeed have some problems with the Chinese. As I said in my earlier reports, I think they derive mainly from the Chinese assessment that we have been weakened over the past few years. Their major concern is that what they perceive as our domestic weakness will be translated into irresolution in the international arena. And they fear that American weakness abroad will encourage Soviet adventurism.

I will make some more precise proposals as to the schedule of your Asian trip when I get back. However, my preliminary view now is that it might be better to resurrect the idea of you visiting the Phillipines and Indonesia and if necessary cut a day off your China trip."

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